

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The title of the invention has been amended to be indicative of the claimed subject matter and overcome the applied objection.

Claims 3 and 4 have been canceled, and claims 1-3 and 6-19 have been amended for clarity and to place all elements in non-means-plus-function format. The claim amendments were drafted to overcome the indefiniteness rejections applied to claims 1-3 and 6-20 and to provide proper dependency for the dependent claims.

Claims 1-3 and 6-21 were rejected, under 35 USC §102(e), as being anticipated by Goto et al. (US 2003/0177236). The Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections as follows.

The present application claims priority to Japanese patent application number JP 2003-012241, filed on January 21, 2003. So as to perfect their claim to priority, the Applicants enclose an English translation of the priority document with a verification that the translation is accurate. Because Goto has a filing date of March 17, 2003, which is subsequent to Applicants' priority date, Goto is disqualified as a prior art reference against the claims of the present application.

Therefore, it is submitted that the rejection under 35 USC §102(e) is overcome, and allowance of claims 1-3 and 6-20 is considered to be warranted.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/James Edward Ledbetter/

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JEL/DWW/att

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